

# Just The Judge's Colt 'Going Home' at €1.4m

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The sale-topping Dubawi colt out of Just The Judge | Zuzanna Lupa

By *Emma Berry*

DEAUVILLE, France—In more ways than one, Ballylinch Stud played a major role during the second session of Arqana's August Sale, not just as the buyer of the top lot ([137](#)), a colt by Dubawi (Ire) out of the G1 Irish 1000 Guineas winner Just The Judge (Ire) (Lawman {Fr}), but as the farm which stands the sire of the next two most expensive colts of the session, Lope De Vega (Ire), and breeder of one of them.

Dubawi was the sire responsible for last year's €1.55-million sale-topper and though this year's leading light didn't quite reach the same heights, at €1.4 million he returned a price entirely befitting his smart pedigree.

Just The Judge is now owned in partnership by Qatar Bloodstock and China Horse Club, but she is very much tied to the County Kilkenny farm, her fifth dam Mesopotamia (Ire) having established a significant dynasty at Ballylinch. Only last month, Bella Estrella (Ire) (High Chaparral {Ire}), a daughter of Just The Judge's granddam Uncharted Haven (Ire), became the latest stakes winner for the family in the Ballylinch silks when landing the Listed Cairn Rouge S. in Ireland.

"He was a gorgeous, imposing colt with a great walk, all the things I like in a horse," said Ballylinch Stud manager John O'Connor. "The Mesopotamia family has been associated with Ballylinch for generations so it's a family we know well and in some ways he's coming home."

Just The Judge's dam Faraday Light (Ire) (Rainbow Quest) raced in the Ballylinch silks and was sold to Joan Keaney Dempsey, a long-term client of the stud.

“Joan sent the mare to Lawman twice in his early days with us and the second filly was Just The Judge,” explained O’Connor, who will offer Just The Judge’s full-brother for Dempsey through the Ballylinch Stud draft at Book 1 of the Tattersalls October Sale.

He continued, “We feel that Lawman is becoming an important broodmare sire and we already have a Group 1 winner by Dubawi, Make Believe (GB), standing at the farm. If this colt is good enough the long-term hope would be to stand him.”

The sale of the colt provided an important landmark for consignors La Motteraye, entrusted by his breeders to prepare him for the sale and bringing their first August topper and first seven-figure return.

“It’s a weight off the shoulders,” said Gwen Monneraye, who set up La Motteraye eight years ago with his partner Lucie Lamotte. “We knew he could have made a lot of money but you never know what will happen. The horse was a complete gentleman to deal with, his temperament was excellent. We don’t dream of topping the sale, just of bringing the best price we can for our clients.”

La Motteraye ended Part 1 of the August Sale as the second-leading vendor with nine sold for €2,730,000, sheer numbers meaning that they would always finish some way behind the behemoth that is the Ecurie des Monceaux draft. Over two evenings, Monceaux sold 26 yearlings for €8,690,000.

### ***Part 1 Finishes Almost on Par...***

In a sale in which the running order is decided by the letter of the dam’s name rather than grading, figures can be up one day and down the next and this was very much the case in Part 1 of the August Sale. While Saturday’s results took a hit across the board, Sunday’s session felt stronger in the ring and looked better on paper. Turnover of €14,079,000 for 59 horses sold—76% of those offered—was up by 16.5%, while the average rose by 10.% to €238,627. The median also rose to €175,000 from €160,000 (+9%).

Taking Part 1 as a whole, figures were largely in line with last year. The clearance rate dropped slightly to 74% from 76%, and the average also saw a very small decrease at €234,735 (-2%). The median of €170,000 was an improvement on last year’s €160,000 (+6%), while the aggregate for the two days, from a total of 117 horses sold—four fewer than last year—was €27,464,000 (-3%).

The August Sale will conclude with a single-session Part 2 today beginning at 1 p.m. local time.

### ***Lope De Vega’s Big Day...***

The importance of a fresh-in-the-mind update was illustrated vividly by the sale of a Lope De Vega (Ire) half-brother to G2 Qatar Vintage S. winner Dark Vision (Ire) (Dream Ahead) for €900,000 less than a year after his sibling made just 15,000gns at Tattersalls. But it also serves as a reminder of how certain sires are too harshly judged in a market of ever-changing whims.

Coolmore’s MV Magnier signed the ticket for the Monceaux-consigned Lope De Vega colt ([lot 94](#)), much to the delight of Tom Ryan, the representative of SF Bloodstock which bred him from Black Dahlia (GB) (Dansili {GB}), a listed-placed five-time winner who has already produced a black-type-earner, Al Hayyah (Ire), by the same stallion in addition to Dark Vision. SF Bloodstock owns shares in both Lope De Vega and Dream Ahead.

“From day one he was a tremendous foal,” said Ryan. “He was born at Baroda Stud and then raised at Monceaux and he’s a flawless colt. I saw his dam this morning and she looks amazing with another quality

Lope De Vega colt at foot and she's now in foal to Almanzor (Fr) (Wootton Bassett {GB}). We're pretty excited about her now."

He added, "This is a great result for the team and it really is a team effort. I'm located in Kentucky and Mick [Flanagan] helps us with a lot of things over here. When you have a horse at Monceaux you have no worries as it really is a world-class nursery. They do everything so well."

"It's also good to have a real vote of confidence in the stallion from Coolmore," he said. "This colt will be given the very best chance at Ballydoyle."

Black Dahlia was herself bought for 40,000gns as a 5-year-old in 2010. Six years later, just after Dark Vision had sold for €15,000 as a foal at Goffs, the mare was offered in the Monceaux draft at Arqana's December Sale but was unsold at €145,000.

John O'Connor has always stood four square behind his stallions and, with his son Jack, he pinhooked Dark Vision as a foal for €15,000, effectively losing a little on the trade when as a yearling he brought the same amount in guineas. But father and son can rightly claim some reflected glory in singling out the colt by Dream Ahead, who spent five seasons at Ballylinch before moving to Haras de Grandcamp in 2017. Subsequent to his success at Glorious Goodwood, Dark Vision has now been sold privately to Godolphin.

"We bought Dark Vision in the name of our own farm, Limefield Stud, and what he has achieved gives us a bit of confidence to carry on doing what we're doing," O'Connor said.

O'Connor's work for the evening was far from complete with the purchase of the top lot. As vendor, Ballylinch Stud enjoyed two really eye-catching results, first through the sale of the full-brother to Belardo (Ire) ([lot 105](#)), who in 2014 became the first Group 1 winner for his sire Lope De Vega. China Horse Club will now race the yearling son of Danaskaya (Ire) (Danehill) after representative Mick Flanagan went to €600,000 to secure the colt.

"He's a good moving colt and a full-brother to a Group 1 winner, by a proven stallion out of a good Danehill mare, which was very important," Flanagan said. "He's been bought for China Horse Club and we're very glad to get him."

A remarkable day for the Ballylinch team was rounded off when they presented [lot 161](#), an Invincible Spirit (Ire) filly. Sold to Godolphin for €900,000, she is the first foal of Group 3 winner Mayhem (Ire) (Whipper), herself a sister to Group 2 winner Royal Bench, the pair out of an unraced daughter of the top-class runner and producer Cerulean Sky (Ire) (Darshaan {GB}).

"We thought she was an extremely nice filly," said Anthony Stroud, signing the docket after John Gosden completed the bidding. "She's bred by a renowned breeder in Brendan Hayes and hopefully she's a filly who can eventually go back to the broodmare band."

The same family had accounted for another good sale a little earlier as Phoenix Thoroughbreds, frustrated underbidders for the American Pharoah filly sold on the opening day, managed to land another one with bright paddock prospects in [lot 140](#). The daughter of Frankel (GB) out of Cerulean Sky's sister L'Anresse (Ire), runner-up in the GI Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Turf and G1 Irish Oaks, realised €480,000. L'Anresse is also closely related to another elite performer and producer in Moonstone (GB) (Dalakhani {Ire})—fertile ground indeed for Phoenix's growing ambitions for the longer term.

“She’s a beautiful filly and we’ve been trying to get some bloodlines to build up the filly side,” confirmed Tom Ludt of Phoenix. “We won’t decide for a while where she’ll be trained but we’ve plenty of trainers and will have a lot of friends [among them] right now.”

The filly was presented by La Motteraye, and Ludt noted that Phoenix had done well with a colt from the same consignment here last year: the €480,000 colt who recently made the frame in the G2 Superlative S. as Neverland Rock (GB) (No Nay Never).

### ***Pharoah Back To America...***

One of the keynotes of this sale was always going to be the appearance in each session of a filly from the first crop of Triple Crown winner American Pharoah (Pioneer of The Nile)—and yesterday the second, at €850,000, surpassed even the €750,000 paid by M.V. Magnier for the first. But where Magnier was intent on experimenting with the Ashford rookie’s adaptability to European turf, [lot 158](#) will be heading back to the land of her father after being signed for by Deuce Greathouse.

Presented by Monceaux, she is out of the Smart Strike mare Marbre Rose (Ire), a Grade III winner from the family of the Grade I “Z team” of Zoftig (Cozzene), Zo Impressive (Hard Spun) and Zaftig (Gone West), and will run for a syndicate whose majority stakeholder, Cindy Hutson, was excited to be present for her first visit—albeit she wished that the European market hadn’t matched the enthusiasm of the domestic one for American Pharoah.

“Cindy’s kind of new in the game, the last couple of years at a lower level, and a few other people will be falling in,” Greathouse explained, one being Robert Masterson for whom he bought champion Tepin (Bernstein) as a yearling. “American Pharoah was such a well balanced horse, and this filly is very similar. And we love the family, it’s a Glencrest family and that’s the Greathouse farm.”

### ***A Dubawi For Scandinavia...***

Besides attesting to his market power with the top lot of the sale, Dubawi reached parts other sires cannot reach through [lot 98](#), at €520,000. Certainly this daughter of dual Grade II winner Cladocera (Ger) (Oasis Dream {GB}) must be one of the most expensive animals ever purchased to race in Scandinavia, but that is where she will start her career after Danish trainer Bent Olsen signed the docket on behalf of his patron Lone Kaj Nielsen.

“Hopefully she can progress from Scandinavia to the bigger scene, which is something Bent Olsen has been able to do before,” said Morten Buskop, Arqana’s regional representative. “Hopefully she will be able to stay there as a breeding prospect one day. But the main story today is that she’s been bought for a lovely Danish lady, who has had horses for many years, and who has fallen absolutely in love with this one. So we are delighted. The filly doesn’t look as though she will be particularly precocious but the owner is always prepared to be patient.”

The filly, presented by Haras de la Perelle, certainly offers a solid genetic base for the longer term. She is her dam’s first foal, out of another black-type winner, and the fourth dam is the triple Grade I winner Annoconnor (Nureyev).